

An Epistle

From our Monethly Meeting, at our Publick Meeting-Houle in Reigate, in Surrey,
the 7th Day of the 9th Month, 1692.

WE being assembled with one accord in the Unity of the Spirit of Truth, and having a deep and weighty Consideration upon our Hearts and Spirits, of the Important Affairs of the Church which the Lord hath gathered in these parts, and out of the Ways and Works of Darkness, to be a People to his praise, and to walk as Children of the Day, in all Godly Conversation and Holiness; for he who hath called us is Holy, and he hath made us livingly sensible that without Holiness of Life and Conversation none can be true Members of the Church of Christ, neither is any the Sons or Daughters of God, but as they are led and guided by the Spirit of God, in which all who have continued and walked, have been preserved out of the Pollutions of the World; and are as Lights among their Neighbours, shewing forth before them their good Works, of a Godly, Peaceable and quiet Life, to the Praise and Glory of our Heavenly Father; for the Truth as it is in Jesus (our holy Head, Leader and Governour) is the Life of Righteousness, and freeth all who receives it from all Unrighteousness.

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teousness: In this is the Children of God in our day manifested, from the Children of *Belial*: for whosoever doeth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he who loveth not his Brother and Neighbour; but he who walketh uprightly, and walketh surely, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him.

And now dearly beloved *Friends*, whom the Lord hath quickened and raised up out of the Grave of Sin and Corruption, to be Monuments of his Mercy, walk in the Light of the Lamb; so will the Salvation of God be as Walls and Bulworks round about you, to preserve you from the fear of *Evil*; Stand ye as Witnesses for God in your day against all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, both amongst your selves, and the World; be ye circumspect and watchful both over your selves, and your Children, and Indulge them not in any thing that is *Evil*, but timely Reprove and Restrain it, lest it become your Sin, and command them to observe the Law of God written in their Hearts; for if you love the Truth, as you ought your selves, you will train up your Children in it when they are young; and keep them to the plain and sound Language which the Truth required and led all the Faithful into in the beginning; and keep them in plain and modest Apparel and Behaviour, in due subjection to the Truth in all things, in an Holy Conversation as much as in you lies, that they may grow up in the Grace of God as Plants of his Renown; this is your Duty the Lord requires it of you, even to watch over your Children, as those that must give an Account to God, while they are under your Wings: *Sin's* not Restraining his Sons became his Sin, because he re-

strained them not, and brought a Curse upon his House
for ever, *1 Sam. v. 13, 14*. Therefore beware of wink-
ing at or neglecting your Childrens Sins, while under
your Tuition, but bring them up in the Nurture and
Admonition of the Lord, lest they bring shame upon
your Houses, and a Reproach upon your Posterity, as
some have already done, by departing from the Coun-
sel of God, and the Word of his Grace, which would
have kept them in the hour of Temptation from the
allurements of the Evil one, and so have made them-
selves a Scorn to Fools, and a Derision to them that are
round about, and hath opened the Mouths of Evil
men to Blaspheme the Name of the Lord and his holy
Tabernacle; Better had it been for such not to have
known the Way of Truth, then thus to turn from the
holy Commandments, which is the Lamp of Righte-
ousness to guide our Feet in the Way of Peace.

And all *Young Men and Maids*, unto whom God
hath given the knowledge of his saving Truth, be ye So-
ber and Watchful, for many and strong are the assaults of
the Enemy to overcome you, and to bring you back
again into *Egypt's Bondage*: Stand steadfast in him
who hath Called you, being girded with the Truth,
that you may be able to Encounter the Enemy of your
Souls, which way soever he appears, having upon your
heads the Helmet of Salvation, and the Breast plate of
Righteousness, and Shield of Faith, and Sound Judge-
ment, the Spiritual Sword girded about your Loins;
In this Armour if you keep, the Enemy cannot touch
you. The saving Truth which God hath made
known in our day, doth Redeem all who love and
obey it, from all Evil whatsoever, and out of the Gall

of Bitterness and Bond of Iniquity, and sets free from every Evil Deed; Word and Work, and discovers Sin in the Seed, Bud and Root thereof, and gives power to slay it there, before it breaks forth into Action; for as it is Inward and Spiritual, it gives an Inward and Spiritual sight of the Man of Sin in all his Wiles and Temptations in the conception thereof, and arms all who believes in it against the Enemy's power, being greater then the Enemy, is able to subdue his power in all mankind, and Redeem them from their vain Conversation, making them capable to serve, worship and obey the living God, which none can do while they are in the Evil deeds of the world. And neither *Pride, Covetousness, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Gluttony, Theft, Murder, Adultery, Idolatry, Hypocrisie,* nor any Ungodliness whatsoever can have any power or prevalency over them who keeps the Word of Faith, which is high in their Hearts, such are Cloathed with the Armour of Light, and they are able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Enemy of their Souls, and through Faith in the Son of God receives Victory over Death, Hell and the Grave; these are Plants of Righteousness in our day, and are daily Watered and Pruned by the Father's Right hand, and grow up as Trees of Righteousness, the planting of the Lord, bringing forth Fruits in due Season to the praise of his Name, who hath called them out of Darkness into his marvelous Light.

And now I exhort you *Brethren and Friends*, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw your selves from every *Brother and Sister* who walks disorderly, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful Works

Works of Darknes, but rather in the Authority of Gods Power and Spirit reprove them : And that you keep not Company with *Fornicators*, for some are already turned aside into *Fornication* : *If any that is Called a Friend or a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, wish such a one not to Eat* ; And if any obey not this Gospel-Precept, Note that Person, and have no fellowship with him or her, that they may be ashamed : And if any have fellowship or society with such before they Repent, after Friends (in Gods Power and Wisdom) have given a Testimony against them, they are to be reprov'd and testified against, as out of the Order of the Gospel, and Practise of the Holy Men of God in former Ages. For we cannot expect to stand clear as a People before our Enemics, till we have faithfully endeavour'd that all our Meetings and Camp may be cleans'd of all Ungodliness whatsoever ; for God is pure and Holy, and will have a People so ; and no unclean thing or person can stand in his Court or Presence, and in this his glorious Gospel Day of Life, Light and Glory, the most Spiritual Ministration, and the Last and Greatest that ever the World shall be visit'd withal, which in tender Mercy and Loving-kindness he hath caused to dawn in us, he will be glorified in, by and through us ; or without us, and against us ; for his Name he will Exalt in Righteousness over Nations, and he will overturn and overturn, till he come to Rule whose right it is, in the Hearts and Consciences of the Sons of men.

And dear Friends, have a care of the Love of the World, and the Riches thereof ; do not choke the good

good Seed of the Kingdom of Righteousness sown in you, for the Enemy lies near many in that respect, their Care, Labour and Industry being more for the Meat that perisheth; then for that which nourisheth to Eternal Life; and many grows Cold in their Love, Zeal and Affection to those weighty Duties which God requires of us, in meeting often together to wait upon him, to feel the operation of his Divine Power and his Comfortable Presence which hath often opened Life and the treasures of it to our Souls; and as we have waited upon the Lord, we have renewed our strength, and in meeting often together we have felt the Lords presence in the midst of us, so that we have not sought his Face in vain; all Holy Praises be returned to him for evermore.

And now *beloved Friends and Brethren*, as the Lord in tender Mercy hath called us out of Darkness, to be Children of his Gospel-Day, let us not sleep as do others, but with girded Loins watch and be sober, casting off all the unfruitful Works of Darkness, and put on the Armour of Light, that we may be valient Soldiers in the Army of the Lamb, and to be able to quench all the Fiery Darts of the Enemy; for of a truth, the Lord is arisen to search his *Jerusalem* with Candles, and he will assuredly find out the Hypocrite and the Unclean, and him who hath saved the Wedge of Gold and the *Babylonish* Garment, though never so close hid in his Tent; for all things are naked and bare to his All-seeing Eye; and wo to him who is covered, and not with the Spirit of the Lord, for he will be left naked to his own Shame to the view of all beholders.

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And all Young Friends, both Male and Female, who have believed in the Truth, and are coming up in the World, beware of a Wanton Loose Spirit, for it will lay you open to many Snares and Temptations, whereby you will be betrayed by the Enemy of your Souls into many noisome Lusts, which will drown you in Perdition, if you give way thereto; but first seek the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof, by walking in the Truth that you have believed in, and then all other things needful for you will be given you of God; and the Blessing withal, which will make you Rich, and add no Sorrow with it: And take heed of seeking Lawful things by Unlawful means, for if you so obtain them, they will wither under your Hands: And make not haste to be Rich in this World, nor to lay up great things for your Children, least it prove their Snare and your Sorrow: for some of us have been Young, and now are grown Old, yet in all our days we never saw the Righteous forsaken, nor his Seed (who hath walked in the Way thereof to the End) begging their Bread; the way to be Happy and Prosperous in this World, and that which is to Come, is first to breath after Righteousness, and walk in its Way, though for it you drink a bitter Cup from the Hands of Men, which if you are willing to drink for a time, the sweet Cup of Blessing and Consolation will be given you of God, who keeps the best Wine till last, and he will Crown your Gray Hairs with Honour and Immortality: So let not out your Affections after the foolish, vain and frivolous Fashions and Customs of this World,

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for they will wither as the Grass, and fade as the Flower thereof. So God Almighty direct your Way, and keep you under the Wing of his Power, in the pure Religion which keeps Unspotted of the World, that the honourable Name by which you are called, and in which you have been preserved; as you have trusted in it, may be your Rock, Refuge, and Tower to the End of your Days; Amen,

Written and Signed in the behalf of the said Meeting;

By Ambrose Rigge.

THE END.





